

Social work researcher advances literature on pediatric quality of life in organ transplant patients

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A Florida State University professor is paving the way for social workers, psychologists and transplant teams across the country to increase the quality of life for children who have received organ transplants.

Assistant Professor of Social Work Michael Killian has published a new study that takes a step back and examines current data related to assessment tools for pediatric organ transplant recipients to improve these children's [quality of life](#) and ensure a successful transplant.

"By federal requirement, there is a [social worker](#) on every transplant team, so that the psychological and social issues of individuals that are undergoing organ transplantation have to be accounted for and cared for," Killian said. "It is a large predictor of whether or not people are successful or not after receiving a heart or a kidney or liver or lung transplant."

The study is published in the journal *Quality of Life Research*.

Killian and his team reviewed results from numerous studies on [organ transplants](#) in [pediatric patients](#) along with quality-of-life data from self-reported assessment tools. The team found that disease-specific quality-of-life tools—driven by data—can help monitor the transplant's success rate. The research emphasizes the need for transplant teams, especially in pediatric cases, to assess general and disease-specific health-related quality of life.

"Findings from this study go beyond excellent medical outcomes," he said. "A primary goal for pediatric patients who have undergone [organ transplantation](#) is to enhance and sustain the improved overall health-related quality of life."

An important aspect of Killian's research is collecting and assessing the literature on disease-specific, health-related quality of life in pediatric recipients. The goal is for that work to be translated into standards of care for children in medically challenging situations.

"Once a child receives a transplant, social workers and others on the

[transplant](#) teams work to support patients and families to integrate the care regimen for this chronic condition back into the home," Killian said. "Our goal is to support these children and families to overcome barriers that may be social or psychological, so there are better opportunities for successful health outcomes."

More information: Michael O. Killian et al. Measurement of health-related quality of life in pediatric organ transplantation recipients: a systematic review of the PedsQL transplant module, *Quality of Life Research* (2020). [DOI: 10.1007/s11136-019-02398-0](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11136-019-02398-0)

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